



ST. JOHN'S
UNIVERSITY



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**Keeping students safe and secure
on campus.**

St. John's University (NY) selects Lenovo storage to support its on-campus video surveillance operations, helping to keep the college community safe.

Lenovo





St. John's University is one of the leading Catholic colleges in the United States, known for its academic programs and diverse student life. More than 21,300 students live and work across the college's four New York City campuses, located in Queens, Manhattan, Staten Island and Hauppauge, Long Island. St. John's University also operates facilities in Rome, Italy and Paris, France, allowing students the opportunity to study overseas.

St. John's University is built on a foundation of faith, service and community, and the college is committed to ensuring a safe, secure, supportive environment for all students, faculty, staff and visitors. Campus safety is, therefore, a top priority.

A dedicated Department of Public Safety operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and works with partners on and off-campus to provide law enforcement and security services across the university. The Department of Public Safety headquarters is located on the Queens campus, with additional Command Centers at the Staten Island and Manhattan campuses, all equipped with the latest video surveillance and communication equipment.

Thomas Ross, Associate Director of Systems Engineering Information Technology at St. John's University, explains: "There are over 1,000 surveillance cameras located across our four NY campuses. The Department of Public Safety monitors the footage in real time to detect and respond to security threats. We also store the video data in case it is needed at a later date, such as to provide evidence in criminal cases."

With each surveillance camera generating 1 TB of data per month, pressure on the underlying storage infrastructure was growing all the time. Previously, St. John's University used a RAID setup to store video data on hard drives distributed across 14 servers, configured as an active-passive VMware cluster.

"In the past, our storage environment was a many-headed monster," recalls Thomas Ross. "We had a limited amount of disk space to work with, and as the years went by, we began approaching capacity. Whenever we added new cameras as part of campus improvement programs, finding space to store the footage became more and more difficult."

As part of a wider infrastructure refresh, St. John's University seized the opportunity to deploy a dedicated storage system to support public safety operations. After evaluating the marketplace, the college selected a Lenovo ThinkSystem DE4000H Hybrid Storage Array.

Thomas Ross remarks: "We're big fans of Lenovo technology and the ThinkSystem DE Series storage offered seamless integration with our Veeam backup solution. We were also impressed by the support the Lenovo team brought to the table. They invited us to visit the Executive Briefing Center in Raleigh, NC, to discuss our storage challenges and requirements. We appreciated being able to pick the experts' brains—their advice was really helpful, especially around sizing."

St. John's University was able to install and set up the Lenovo ThinkSystem DE4000H array in next to no time.

"It almost took longer to get the array out of the box than it did to get it online," jokes Thomas Ross. "Once we got the solution racked and cabled up, it took minutes to provision. The interface is so intuitive and it's super-easy to manage, so anybody on the IT team can work with it. You don't need to be a storage expert by any means."



Today, St. John's University no longer needs to worry about finding room to store ever-increasing amounts of video data. "We've got lots of headroom for growth," says Thomas Ross. "Not having to mess about with load balancing and juggling limited local disk resources is a weight off our shoulders."

In addition, the Public Safety Department has seen performance soar since moving to the Lenovo ThinkSystem DE4000H array.

Thomas Ross confirms: "Security officers can access video data much faster than before. It used to take up to an hour to load stored data into the surveillance application to pinpoint a specific section needed for evidence. Now officers can access the data in just a few minutes. Similarly, indexing video footage used to take several days. With the Lenovo ThinkSystem DE Series Storage, it only takes 24 hours."

Looking to the future, St. John's University is considering upgrading to Lenovo ThinkSystem DM Series All-Flash Storage to boost performance further still. The all-flash arrays are designed to deliver industry-leading performance, capacity and density, and to eliminate bandwidth bottlenecks.

Thomas Ross concludes: "Safety on campus is paramount, so it's vital that the systems underpinning security operations run reliably 24/7. We know that we can trust Lenovo to support our critical video surveillance activities, helping us to keep students safe."

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- Thomas Ross, Associate Director, Systems Engineering
Information Technology, St. John's University

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